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Addendum

Discussion paper contributed by the trade unions*

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* The views and opinions expressed in the present discussion paper are those of the trade unions and do not necessarily represent those of the United Nations.



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'Plough to Plate' Approaches to Food and Agriculture

Trade unions will be represented at the CSD2000 Dialogue Session by the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU), the Trade Union Advisory Committee to the OECD (TUAC) and the International Union of Food, Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco and Allied Workers' Associations (IUF), which together have over 130 million members in 137 countries and territories. Desired outcomes for the CSD2000 Dialogue Session include:

• **Agricultural workers** and their trade unions to be recognized as a distinct group for the implementation of Agenda 21, Chapter 14 on Agriculture and to recognize the Chairman's report of the FAO/Netherlands conference on MFCAL (see Part Two): "...*agricultural workers and other involved stakeholders must be involved directly*" in implementation the World Food Summit Plan of Action;

ILO Core labour standards: Workers' participation in workplace actions to be enhanced by recognising their freedom to organise and bargain collectively to employment equality and abolition of child or forced labour;

ILO Health & Safety Instrument for agriculture workers: Support for a new ILO Convention proposed in June/July 2000;

Public & occupational health: CSD to support implementation of the WHO World Declaration & Plan of Action on Nutrition through workplace-based education; Agenda 21, Chapter 16 should be reviewed to consider a

proposed plan of action on food quality and safety, related to biotechnology & GMO's;

Workplace indicators to be supported as a means of promoting a sustainable system of agricultural production and food industry;

Land reform for sustainable development: Coherent land reform to be used as the basis of planning for a sustainable food system;

MFCAL and agricultural workers: FAO concept of 'Multifunctional Character of Agriculture and Land' to be supported but also revised, to recognize the role of waged agricultural workers and core labour standards;

Transparency & workplace education;

Guidelines for Multinationals; Companies in food & agriculture to be made accountable for investment and production decisions;

Capacity building & developing countries: Concrete steps to enable less developed countries and their workers to participate fully in a sustainable agriculture and food;

Distribution inequities & poverty to be addressed through effective planning, employment as well as land and incomes policies;

'Business Entrepreneurship': Governments to support previous CSD Dialogue Sessions

approaches to management and a role for workers in sustainable development.

1. 'Plough to Plate' approaches: A triangle of issues

For hundreds of millions of workers around the world, feeding themselves and their family is a major challenge. Everyone requires adequate and safe nourishment. However, as we enter the new Millennium, this basic goal is beyond the reach of nearly a billion of the world's people.

A sustainable approach to food and agriculture begins with an understanding of the way in which current patterns of food consumption and production¹ relate to people's ability to buy food that is safe, adequate, and nutritious, and to the conditions of those who produce our food. The dominant problem today is not with insufficient production of food; rather, it is with the distribution of the benefits². Large segments of the world's population cannot afford to buy the food they require, and lack access to land to produce their own food in sustainable ways. In addition, much of the world's food is produced under unacceptable conditions, especially for waged agricultural workers³, who are ironically amongst those least able to access the food they need. In brief, current agricultural production and food systems are unsustainable in terms of:

- Distribution;
- Impacts on the natural environment;
- Impacts on producers and their communities;
- Impacts on wage agricultural workers;
- Public and occupational health, nutrition and food safety.

2. Roles for Workers and Trade Unions

¹ **Definitions in this paper:** *agricultural production* refers to the production of agricultural food crops, animal products or commodities. The *food industry* refers to all other aspects of the food chain.

² See FAO, *State of Food & Agriculture*, 1999.

³ **Core labour standards:** Agenda 21, Ch. 29 signaled a commitment by governments to recognize a special role for workers and trade unions in the implementation of change at the workplace. CSD98 proposed that core labour standards, linked to workplace health & safety become key features of this.

Workers and trade unions are well-positioned to promote a sustainable system of agricultural production and food that would 'spill-over from workplaces to families and communities.

a) Workers are the backbone of food production: Approximately 1.3 billion people work in 'agricultural production' - a full half of the world's labour force. Our focus is on the 450 million waged agricultural workers who are involved in the production of agricultural food crops and animal products or commodities. Workers are in a position to promote solutions for more sustainable patterns of production and consumption in all aspects of the food system: a) production of food and of input products; b) transportation & storage; b) packaging and merchandising; c) marketing, distribution, & sales; d) tourism, recreation, and leisure; e) waste management and recycling facilities; and e) supply or waste of water and energy for food production. Positive employment policies would not only assure them more equitable access to food; they would also serve to address key problems of agricultural production and the food industry.

b) Workers are the world's food consumers: With wage agricultural workers as notable exceptions, trade union members are amongst the most fortunate workers in the world, because they can generally afford their basic food needs, as compared to non-unionized counterparts. They are also in a better position to shape new attitudes and practices as consumers. Workers form the bulk of the food buying public and are in a unique position to support public policies and measures to implement local, national and international change.

c) Involvement of workers and trade unions makes substantial change possible Deterioration of our biodiversity, wildlife habitat, soil, air and water quality must be a basic concern for all people. Trade unions are in a position to engage members in action to implement policies in the workplace, and throughout the world's food system.

3. Addressing Barriers to Worker Involvement

a) Current barriers to worker and trade union involvement must be recognized and addressed. Foremost among these is "**Taylorism**", which describe the relationship of employers to workers by dictating that *conception* belongs to management, and that workers simply *execute* predetermined tasks. Solutions require the full engagement of workers as consumers and producers; not just as 'labour power', but as a creative and caring human force.

b) **Recognition of basic workers' rights**⁴ including the right to organize is a first step to ensuring a democratic workplace where change must begin. Core labour standards, employment equity and the prohibition of child or forced labour are priorities. The rights of **waged agricultural workers** must be a special focus for CSD2000. They must be recognized as equal partners for the implementation of Chapter 14, Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development.

c) **Workplace based education and training** must supplement workplace target-setting and implementation by eliciting worker involvement in enterprise auditing, assessments and evaluations. As well, they must build on joint programs for workplace health and safety, and integrate training objectives with current trade union programs, wherever applicable.⁴

PART 1: Agriculture Production & Food Consumption

1. The benefits of productivity: Food for the public or for profit?

Rising productivity in agriculture and food production has made great leaps in our ability to provide the world with food. Productivity refers to *food rate output, relative to cost of labour, capital and energy inputs employed to support its production*. Current trends seek to lower input costs, whilst reaping benefits from sales and marketing. Food productivity has increased dramatically because of improved techniques, machines and automation as well as use of chemicals, pesticides and biocides. Recent advances in biotechnology and genetically modified organisms (GMOs) will further feed into this process. The question that now remains for all of us is: *For what public purpose should increased food productivity rises be encouraged in the future and how should the benefits be more directed to promoting a sustainable food system?*

Today, the lion's share of profits from productivity increases goes to those who own, market and control production and distribution. Productivity has created new sources of wealth, and has been a driving force for change. However, its promise to feed the world's hungry has yet to be fulfilled. The challenge facing the CSD is to address productivity issues as they apply to the worst features of our inadequate food distribution policies.

⁴Training: Convention 142 Human Resources Development, 1975 provides for policies and programmes of vocational guidance and vocational training, closely linked with employment.

2. The downward spiral of an unsustainable food system

- (a) World hunger and poverty continue;⁵
- (b) Developing countries get a raw deal, receiving too few benefits from the food industry;
- (c) Food is produced primarily for profit, secondarily for public health;
- (d) **Recognition of basic workers' rights**⁶, including the right to organize, is a first priority;
- (e) Workers in the food system are under-recognized;
- (f) Agricultural workplaces are dangerous;
- (g) Child labour is rampant and female workers are exploited;
- (h) Unemployment grows with productivity and from lost tenant or family farm holdings;
- (i) Environmental degradation has reached crisis levels. Our main concerns in this area relate to
 - Dangerous Chemicals with the intensification of agriculture through increased inputs: e.g., pesticides, veterinary products and fertilizers.
 - Reduced water quality with expansion of irrigated acreage, and use of toxic inputs
 - Unsustainable relationship to animals and plants 'Factory farming', has a particularly devastating effect on biodiversity, as well as wildlife habitat and landscape;
- (j) Increased control by fewer and larger companies and financial institutions.

3. Sustainable agriculture for the health & well-being of all citizens

A major reorientation must correct the inadequate distribution of income and access to food, to more evenly share the benefits of rising productivity, especially for those who work to bring the food to our tables (see Land Reform in Part Two).

a) Promoting wide-spread public health through worker food and nutrition programmes: Signatories to the *World Declaration and Plan of Action on Nutrition* (WHO/FAO 1992) agreed to promote production and consumption of nutritional foods as a way to ensure public health and

⁵ 'Food security' depends on access to enough safe and nutritious food to lead a healthy and active life..

⁶ Refers to the Right to Organise (i.e., form democratic trade unions) and to engage in collective bargaining; as prescribed in ILO Convention 87: *Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise*, 1948 and ILO Convention 98: *Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining*.

reduce or eliminate the causes of major diseases and illnesses leading to premature death. Many countries are taking concrete steps to promote healthier diets amongst their populations; but there is a need to focus on workplace-based programmes which pay attention to such factors as:

- Individual health and well-being of workers;
- Health deficiencies and food nutrition, including job-related needs;
- Consumption of vegetables, fruits, raw products and leafy greens;
- Nutrition for young and aging workers;
- Infant feeding & nutrition of female workers;
- Nutrition for sick and injured workers;
- Refined & industrially-processed foods;
- Fat, animal products, and carbohydrates;
- Biotechnology or genetically-altered foods;
- Addictions to alcohol, drugs, caffeine, sugar, tobacco, and pharmaceutical products,

There are endless possibilities for worker-based education programs as a vehicle for promotion of public health with respect to food.

b) Promoting occupational health & safety as a springboard to public health ⁷: A 1999 WHO meeting of Ministers called on member countries to link occupational health and safety to programs for public health, and trade unions are now working on this. Public health programs can be linked to existing mechanisms for occupational health, & safety, adding worker nutrition as a key feature. Government programs, industrial relations, corporate practices (e.g. travel and per diem food allowances), uses of facilities (e.g. eating spaces and food privileges), and organising of events (e.g. conferences, meetings and gatherings where food is served) should be considered as opportunities for information and education.

c) Improving conditions for workers in agriculture production and the food industry: Occupational and public health among workers, particularly waged agricultural workers, deserves a particular and urgent focus. However, improvements are particularly needed for the following:

- **waged agricultural workers** who do not own or rent the land on which they work, or the tools and equipment they use, and are therefore distinct from farmers;⁸
- **women workers** who account for 20-30% of all agricultural wage employment. Their employment is often of a casual and seasonal nature and therefore difficult to measure;
- **contract workers** whose conditions of work must be standardised;
- **child workers**, whose labour must be abolished in accordance with ILO *Convention 138 Minimum Age*, (1973) and other recent conventions and agreements on child labour;
- **migrant workers and their families**, who desperately require protection for working and living conditions, at the same time as conditions of stable, local labour are promoted;
- **indigenous people** whose land and livelihood are affected must be consulted and assured compensation rights in the event of relocation in accordance with ILO instruments;
- **family farm labour**, for which there is currently little or no effective protection;
- **forced and compulsory labour** must be abolished according to ILO *Convention #29 on Forced Labour* (1930), and ILO *Convention #105 on Abolition of Forced Labour* (1957);
- **dead, injured or sick workers**; especially as compensation or care is often unavailable.

d) Beefing up workplace health and safety with ILO Convention 155⁹ Occupational risks in food and agriculture industries require that ILO *Convention 155 Occupational Safety and Health* be ratified by all countries to provide: a) co-operation at the workplace between workers and employers in the work environment, e.g., through joint health and safety committees; b) the right of workers to refuse unsafe and unhealthy work (also in the ILO Convention on the Prevention of Major Industrial Accidents; c) the right to information and training; and d) specific government provision for health and safety, in the form of health and safety legislation and regulations; government resources devoted to health and safety; and an inspectorate.

e) Support for new ILO Instrument on health & safety for agriculture workers In June-July 2000, the International Labour Organisation (ILO) will consider an Instrument relating to health and safety of workers in agriculture. The new Convention will promote the WHO/FAO action

⁷ See IUF *Study of the Effectiveness of the Industry-Sponsored Safe Use Project for Pesticide Users*

⁸ International Labour Organization (ILO) Sectoral Activities Programme: *Wage workers in agriculture: Conditions of employment and work*. Geneva, 1996, TMAWW/1996.

⁹ ILO Convention 155 (Occupational Safety and Health), 1981

plan for public health and extend to agriculture workers the same level of protection that exists for other workers. Such a Convention and other Instruments should be the basis for addressing:

- OH&S structures and principles;
- Chemicals & safety for chemicals at work;
- Distribution and uses of pesticides (e.g. FAO International Code of Conduct);
- Hours of work & conditions of employment;
- Safety representatives, safe systems of work, and labour inspections;
- Rural workers & their role in economic and social development;
- Employment conditions of plantation workers.

4. A call for workplace indicators of sustainable development

Trade unions employ a concept of sustainable development based on "indicators" or criteria for environmentally-sound development. The following indicators should be basis of change for workplace actions to promote a sustainable agriculture and food system: Political indicators; Economic Indicators; Social indicators; Environment indicators; • International indicators; Equality of opportunity and treatment indicators¹⁰; and Education & training indicators.

These indicators are described in *Worker Education Environment*, produced by ILO/ACTRAV in cooperation with trade unions in order to build capacity for environmental action among workers and their trade unions. Each of these indicators relates to existing ILO standards, including the freedom of association, employment equity and prohibition of forced or child labour, as well as health and safety in workplaces. The OECD has also undertaken to define its own indicators of

¹⁰ Work sites must be safe for women, free from sexual harassment and other discrimination and abuse, promote access to jobs and promote affirmative action in skills training, recruitment and career development. ILO Convention #100 on Equal Remuneration, 1951 provides for equal remuneration for work of equal value. ILO Convention #111 on Discrimination (employment and occupation) 1958 promotes equality of opportunity and treatment in employment.

sustainable development.⁴¹ Governments and intergovernmental bodies are urged to establish well-harmonised 'workplace' indicators that incorporate the above elements.

5. Applying workplace indicators to agriculture and food safety

a) Promoting change through enterprise audits, assessments & monitoring of workplaces

Workers can play a positive role in designing and implementing effective tools for workplace monitoring and research. Worker assessments/audits have demonstrated that worker involvement improves their own health and safety, as well as that of the community environment.

b) Addressing food safety issues: The special case of biotechnology and genetically modified foods can be addressed using workplace indicators as they apply to:

- Allergenicity to GModified foods;
- Spreading of antibiotic resistance throughout the food chain;
- Toxicity of GModified crops to wildlife;
- Transfer of GModified genes to native species;
- Agricultural methods reliant on chemicals that have adverse effects on wildlife;
- Monopolistic control of corporations that produce and own rights to GMO's.

c) A worker and trade union framework for 'food safety' must provide for: a) consumer information and protection, b) a strong regulatory framework, c) reliable research and science based decision-making, d) reliance on the 'precautionary principle', e) involvement of stakeholders, and f) seek workplace solutions for health and safety. It would also promote agreement in such areas as: (a) risk & hazard assessment and analysis/methodology in biotechnology, including public health risks; (b) quality attributes for nutritional content, production methods and effective regulatory compliance; (c) the role of environmental measures to address Article XX of GATT for the commercial discrimination or Technical Barriers to Trade, and how these relate to other agreements (UN, WTO, etc.); (d) cultural ethical, moral considerations in international trade rules; (e) intellectual property rights, especially where it concerns living creatures, and (f) support for the Codex Alimentarius.

⁴¹ Work currently in progress on *Indicators of Sustainable Development* was mandated by the OECD High Level Advisory Group on the Environment in 1997.

d) Workplace-centred 'food safety' approaches in workplaces where food safety is most at risk should become the object of joint trade union/employer enterprise initiatives for assessment and implementation. Solutions should focus on such areas as: waste management, contamination of soils, water and crops, facilities where food additives and chemicals are produced or used, or microbiological and other risk facilities, such as for slaughtering and butchery.

6. Guiding principles for a sustainable food system:

a) Community control for local self-sufficiency and reliance based on local authority and multi-stakeholder processes that operate to reverse unsustainable trends.

b) Justice, social transition and a sustainable food system: The social and employment impacts of changes to the food system must be well understood, and transition processes, supported by effective financial measures and instruments to assure workers (and farmers) that their livelihood would be secured through compensation, retraining and social support.

c) Regulatory framework for voluntary agreements to be coordinated by governments at all levels, to have the effect of supplementing and strengthening existing regulatory compliance.

d) Capacity building strategies: for developing countries and their workers to build trade, investments, technology and regulatory capability as the basis of policy decisions.

PART 2: Land for sustainable agriculture & food cycles

1. Characteristics of an unsustainable approach to land and nature

All agriculture and food depend on a single, integrated ecosystem. Current patterns of consumption and production, and in particular, a focus on productivity, make unsustainable demands on land, and other resources required for agriculture, with a negative effect on agricultural workers and their communities. Unsustainable agriculture is characterized by

- **'Factory farming'** based on a narrowly-defining use of land, relying on mechanisation, chemicals and other synthetic inputs, controlled by a few multinational interests.
- **Unsustainable use of water supplies**, especially as most recent growth in world food production has largely come from expansion of irrigated acreage.¹²,

¹² *Sustainable Management of Water in Agriculture* The Athens Workshop OECD Proceeding, 1998

- **An unsustainable relationship to nature and life** as biodiversity and wildlife are at risk from agricultural practices that seek to eradicate all competing plant and animal species.
- **An unsustainable relationship to agricultural workplaces and communities.** An increasingly untenable base for rural workers has meant the death of rural settlements.

2. The Multifunctional Character of Agriculture and Land

Agriculture is sustainable when it is ecologically sound, economically viable, socially just, culturally appropriate, and based on a holistic and scientific approach. It is characterized by resource conservation, nutrient recycling, and water and soil conservation, and a secure supply of safe, nutritious food, in harmony with natural ecosystems and viable communities¹³. It relies on local control, with workers involved in decision-making, enterprise auditing and assessments, stock-taking, target-setting, implementation, monitoring and reporting. It also depends on capacity-building for developing countries, with resources to enable regulatory compliance. The overall aim of a sustainable, world-wide food system, is consistent with the concept of Multifunctional Character of Agriculture and Land as defined by the FAO as follows:

*"Evolving from Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development (SARD), the concept of the Multifunctional Character of Agriculture and Land (MFCAL) encompasses the entire range of environmental, economic and social functions associated with agriculture and related land use. The concept is based on the assumption that agricultural systems are intrinsically multifunctional, and have always fulfilled more than just their primary aim of producing food, fibre and fuel. Analysis of the multifunctional character contributes to understanding the potential linkages, synergies and trade-offs that can help to achieve sustainability in agriculture and rural development. The MFCAL approach provides a policy orientated analytical framework for the achievement of SARD goals."*¹⁴

a) MFCAL recognises that agricultural land is where most agriculture workers live, raise families, form communities, and build a social life.¹⁵ This approach, therefore, demands a place

¹³ The NGO Sustainable Agriculture Treaty in Rio declared that "sustainable agriculture is a model of social and economic organisation which promotes participation".

¹⁴ "Cultivating our futures: taking stock of the multifunctional character of agriculture and land", paper prepared for an FAO/Netherlands conference on MFCAL, 12-17 September 1999.

¹⁵ Ibid. MFCAL provides a tool for evaluating monocultural activities, dominating agriculture today.

for sustainable communities of producers and consumers who care about their environment, and promote new approaches to land, water, and resources that preserve their communities.

b) MFCAL must recognise waged agricultural workers and their trade unions as contemplated in Chapters 29, Agenda 21, as well as Chapter 14, on Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development (SARD). The Chairman's Report from the FAO/Netherlands Conference on MFCAL, recognised that, "*agricultural workers and other involved stakeholders must be involved directly*" in the implementation of the World Food Summit Plan of Action. The CSD must endorse this language, add reference to trade unions and integrate respect for core labour standards into MFCAL. Landless workers and small landholders must also be recognised.¹⁶

c) MFCAL and community businesses MFCAL provides for a wide variety of products and resources related to the land, creating the basis for small and medium-sized business that lead a response to public concerns about food safety and security, and are rooted in the community.

d) MFCAL and a sustainable approach to water About 70 per cent of all human freshwater consumption occurs in agriculture. MFCAL practices would increase the efficiency of water use, avoid waste, and preserve supplies (e.g., by controlling pollution and maintaining watersheds) as recommended by the Athens Workshop. At the CSD98 Dialogue Session on 'Business Entrepreneurship' trade unions highlighted a workplace approach for action on water that dealt with: a) Water consumption at the workplace; b) Water-related wastes from the workplace, c) Water-related workplace Inputs, d) Costs of community water supply; and e) Roles for water agreements that deal with water quality, supply and sanitation, urban & rural development, public health, water prices, pollution abatement, codes of conduct for water supplies¹⁷, investment and procurement, and agriculture and climate change.

e) MFCAL and adequate registration and control of chemical and other synthetic inputs. Attention must also be given to the *Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for certain Hazardous Chemicals in International Trade* signed in 1998 by 62

¹⁶ The IUF is promoting closer links between waged workers, small farmers and landless workers through its *Lands and Freedom Project*.

¹⁷ PSI, *An International Code of Conduct for Clean and Safe Drinking Water, and for Fair Labour Practices in Water Services*.

countries. Dumping of pesticides and chemicals into developing countries is a major health and safety problem for workers and a food safety concern. We therefore urge the CSD to:

- press for speedy ratification of the PIC Convention in their countries;
- support efforts to introduce pesticides onto the PIC list, targeting 'severely hazardous formulations causing health or environmental problems in developing countries;
- create advisory panels composed of representatives of trade unions, communities, industries, academia and government for purposes of evaluation and control.

3. Key elements of a sustainable system of agricultural production

a) Land reform: A sustainable system of food and agriculture requires a significant redistribution of land, resources, and income. Land reform must promote universal access to food, employment and social transition, access to land and multistakeholder involvement in decision-making, through measures which promote increased personal incomes of agriculture workers. Farmers must own their own land, or have access to it under reasonable terms, and production must be reoriented away from luxury and export-oriented production towards local needs. People must be given basic tools to produce food for themselves and governments must reduce dependencies on the world markets. (see also Part Four on Transnationals).

b) Attention to growing pressures on agriculture from:

- **Climate change:** Employment and environmental impacts of climate change and measures to mitigate its effects, will be more severe in agriculture than any other sector;
- **Urban development & transportation ;**
- **Forestry** The IFF¹⁸ process has reviewed the underlying causes of deforestation, and found that forestry and agriculture can be jointly contribute to family incomes;
- **Energy & mining as determinants of agricultural land uses;**
- **Tourism:** Land conflicts between tourism and agriculture were noted at the CSD99 Dialogue Session on Tourism.

PART 3. Communication & Education for Agriculture & Food

¹⁸ International Federation of Building and Woodworkers, *Inter-governmental Forum on Forests*

1. Providing for education, training, & information needs

Agenda 21 assigned a high priority to communication, education, and other forms of capacity-building to make sustainable development a reality, including for agriculture production and the food industry. Education and communication are required for the (i) **food consumers** about nutrition and food safety, as well as the environmental, human and social costs of its production; (ii) **agricultural producers** about production issues, nutrition, health, as well as their environment and agriculture impacts; (iii) **workers in the food system**, (particularly waged agricultural workers) to understand how to improve the conditions of work and how they can bring about needed changes through workplace actions.

2. Building the knowledge & capacity of food consumers

A primary aim of education and communication is to increase the knowledge and the skills of food consumers, necessary to make informed choices which promote public health in tandem with promoting sustainable agriculture. Focusing on workers, as the bulk of the consuming public opens the door to the "quantum leaps" in change described below.

a) Education must address the extensive advertising conducted by multinational companies that control our agriculture and food system. Advertising and corporate promotion are big business, and an international commitment is required to limit and counter its effects. It will require greater attention to public education, research and scientific activity, and regulatory standards and monitoring of the food industry, as well as a major commitment to capacity-building.

b) Transparency is the key to public awareness requiring research, decision-making and communication. It requires a commitment to the full access to information and the fundamental right to participate in decision-making. Proper labeling of products, backed by sound monitoring and reporting of production processes, must be assured as well as provisions for appeals of decisions related to approvals, permits and licensing. All this must occur in a well-developed regulatory framework for the production and marketing of food products, and moratoria instituted to ensure adequate review prior to implementation. It calls, as a minimum, for:

- Regulation to curtail misleading advertising,; e.g., false health and nutrition claims;

- Consumer education, aimed at school children and the public, provided by government, schools, consumer groups and trade unions;
- Trustworthy labeling and certification to encourage wise food buying habits;
- Intellectual property rights that allow worker involvement and information.

c) **Workers are in the best position to know about problems** in the current system of production. Transparency is therefore best served when they are secure and confident in employment, educated on their rights and responsibilities as employees and as environmental citizens, and enjoy the protection of the law. Preconditions for full and productive worker participation in education include:

- **Right to information;**
- **Right to refuse dangerous work;**
- **"Whistle-blower" protection;**
- **Right to Participate.**

Workplaces are themselves major consumers of food (see Part One, 4b.), and a focus for change. Using workplace indicators to conduct enterprise assessments (see Part One, 6.) must become common practice. Moreover, many workplaces depend on, or result in, **worker/consumer points of contact** which can become vehicles for education and information sharing.

3. Workplace approaches to education and communication

Current agriculture production practices, food habits and attitudes are deeply-ingrained in our culture and economy. A **quantum leap** in our ability to engage in communication, education, training, and information-sharing for change is called for. This involves appreciation of new concepts, such as 'multifunctionality', and increasing our access to information, which makes environmentally-responsible choices possible and capacity-building a reality.

a) **Communication and education at the level of production.** Our Introduction identifies 'Taylorism' as a barrier to worker involvement. Quantum leaps in changes cannot take place unless **employers recognize workers as human beings**, not just means of production. Such a change would foster behaviour patterns that go beyond narrow precepts of just meeting minimum standards, to that of promoting the full health and well-being of workers, including for nutrition and other health factors. Engaging with workers in this way would build awareness of

environmental and social issues and foster new attitudes towards consumption at work, in homes and in communities. Education, and information systems developed for occupational health and safety can serve as a **springboard** to programs for agricultural workers, farmers, communities and consumers. As well, vocational training, improvement of skills, when undertaken in the context of an approach to lifelong learning, can equip workers, to participate in and influence change.

b) The educational role of workers & the industrial relations process: Given their place in the production process, workers can serve as teachers and promoters of consumer behaviour that relates to sustainable forms of agriculture. Workers and employers seeking improvements to workplaces could become a basis for education. **Enterprise assessments/audits** can help meet Agenda 21 objectives, through improvements to production and become a tool for implementing a sustainable food system. Reliable uses of **eco-labels** can supplement educational activities.

4. Promoting an educational role for other stakeholders

a) Integrating worker and consumer education as part of the public education system. Education International (EI), an International Trade Secretariat (ITS) for the world's educators has developed models for public education that could promote new attitudes and practices in the world's public school systems.

b) A role for NGOs & consumer and agriculture organisations. Well-informed food consumers would be more willing to accept 'quantum leaps' in changes. Trade unions are willing to enter into productive partnerships with NGOs, including consumer and agriculture organizations, to implement real change.

c) A role for public sector research and information. Information for public and worker education requires adequate funding for independent research, and monitoring for which companies should be required to pay a levy. Government inspectors and inspection systems can become instruments of change, especially with respect to voluntary agreements that supplement regulation or standards. An effective science policy must underlie all government decision-making and be independent from the agricultural and food investment interests. Processes which

weaken scientific input (e.g., commercialisation) must be avoided, and clear and transparent procedures be in place to resolve conflicts of interest within the community.

d) An educational role for international agencies, standards and agreements. Agenda 21 recognises workers; rights, working conditions, and health and safety as sustainable development issues. Education of workers should include: a) *ILO Convention #155 Occupational Safety and Health*; b) *ILO Convention # 142 Human Resources Development*, for vocational guidance and training linked with employment; c) *ILO Declaration of Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work*, which contain the central features of all ILO Conventions; d) *Multilateral Environmental Agreements*, especially with respect to environmental sections of trading agreements; and e) a new ILO Instrument for the health and safety of agricultural workers proposed in June/July, 2000

e) The need for international capacity-building Agenda 21 noted capacity-building as a basis for sustainable development. Education about such issues as land reform and workplace joint employer-worker enterprise assessments/audits as a way of meeting community targets in developing countries. In addition, the development of environmentally-sound technologies is a priority areas for the international community. The capacity to communicate and educate is key to all of the areas we have identified, as a key to bridging the gap between producers and consumers, and to counteracting the growing influence of multinationals in this field.

5. Education, regulatory compliance and voluntary agreements

Voluntary Agreements (VA's) must supplement or strengthen regulatory compliance, as a means of promoting sustainable development. Almost all VAs concern changes to workplaces, where workers can help monitor and report on their progress in meeting stated aims. Education and training is needed to improve on current workplace monitoring, record-keeping, and reporting mechanisms, including for workplaces in developing countries. **Collective agreements** are ideally-suited to the reality of workplace and lessons should be drawn from them, as models for implementation of VAs. Collective agreements address particular workplace problems faced by the food and agricultural worker and are used to remedy problems such as: exposure to chemicals and other synthetic inputs, food, improvements in living and eating spaces, clean water, and a chemical-free living environment. Collective agreements can help maximize the educational opportunities in the workplace over a host of issues, including for VAs.

PART 4 Globalisation, liberalisation & investment patterns

1. The effects of globalisation on our agriculture and food system

Security of food and water, is a fundamental human right, but economic relations deny this right to millions around the world, as well as having adverse effects on the natural environment, employment, and other social requirements of the workers who provide the labour.

a) Assessing the effect of globalisation on distribution The merits of globalisation must be measured relative to its implications for community and natural environments; e.g., in the ability of the world's people to feed themselves. After a period of expansion in world food supply, world's per capita agriculture production began stagnating in the 1990's, with the result that the number of countries suffering a **food deficit** rose drastically from 15 in 1994 to 29 in 1997, with more than half in Africa.¹⁹ Ironically, the decade of the most rapid expansion in world trade in history, saw a marked drop in access to adequate food by the people producing it.

A decade of sustained liberalisation has exacerbated **malnourishment** and **starvation** as aspects of worldwide poverty. In 1969, the gap between the richest fifth and the poorest fifth of the world's population was about 30:1; by 1990, it increased to 60:1; and in 1999, it is 74:1. Three decades of liberalisation has increased the **gap in distribution of wealth** by more than 135 per cent. The richest fifth now account for about 86 per cent of all consumption, while the poorest fifth account for 1 per cent. Access to food and other benefits of agriculture is only one aspect.

b) The financial squeeze on farmers, small producers, and businesses has forced them to convert to increasingly unsustainable methods of production, in order to survive.²⁰ Trade liberalisation,²¹ including changes in land ownership, tenure laws and price support mechanisms have occurred without regard for social or environmental impacts. The **impetus toward higher productivity lowers per unit costs** and has led to more intensive farming methods and expanded cultivated surfaces, leading to greater deforestation, soil erosion, and loss of biodiversity.²² The results lead to loss of livelihood, increased poverty, and urban migrations.

¹⁹ FAO, *The State of Food and Agriculture (SOFA)*, 1994

²⁰ *Ibid*

²¹ WWF, *Sustainable Trade for a Living Planet: Reforming the World Trade Organisation*, 1999.

²² Virtually all of the negative impacts are noted in the OECD Study, *Agriculture and the Environment* OECD.

c) **Addressing international debt & capacity-building:** A recent OECD publication reveals that at the end of 1998, countries requiring Official Development Assistance owed a net external debt alone of US\$2,565 billion,²³ with the 48 Least Developed Countries on the United Nations list, accounting for the bulk of this debt. Not only does a large part of their productive capacity go to servicing an increasingly unmanageable debt; the 'debt squeeze' has forced many into unsustainable patterns of agriculture and trade with policies that increase dependency and reduce capacity. Commercial debt repayment facilitated by World Bank/IMF involved 'structural adjustment' terms that have put immense pressure on countries to 'liberalise' their economies. Debtor nations have been induced to produce **export crops** for foreign exchange to pay off crushing debts, threatening local food security by, firstly, diverting production from local needs, and secondly, subjecting production to a regime in which prices fluctuate radically because of several factors, including weather and macroeconomic trends.

2. The role of transnational corporations & financial institutions

a) The "internationalisation" of production and consumption divides North from South and separates increasingly large, intensive agricultural operations that tend to be mechanised and which use many more commercial inputs from small-scale, subsistence agricultural operations, which are based on traditional methods. With production and trade increasingly dominated by powerful transnational corporations (TNC's), a handful now control most of the world's agricultural trade,²⁴ and with their size, and concentration, have managed to "internationalise" production and consumption; their emphasis on 'free trade' has predominated over calls for 'fair trade'. The policies and practices of the World Trade Organisation (WTO), International Monetary Fund (IMF) and other inter-governmental bodies, such as the OECD, must be reviewed with respect to **corporate concentration and control** to draw attention to the:

- Concentration of control over the industry;
- Control of land & the condition of landless rural workers;
- Competitive abuse of workers' rights in order to attract investment;
- The extent & effects of vertical integration.

²³ OECD, *External Debt Statistics*, 1997 - 1998, 1999.

²⁴ Cargill's, Continental, etc.

- Access to capital (credit); interlocking directorships, and corporate partnerships;
- Access to technical assistance & corporate control over patterns of world trade;
- Marketing chains and their relationship to local producers and retailers;
- The use of advertising to gain control of the market;
- Investment, currency regulation and profit.

b) Corruption and collusion between government officials and companies has aggravated problems of an unsustainable agricultural production and food system. International bodies and agencies must lead to convincing actions to curb these practices; e.g., the OECD has sponsored an extensive process to review and implement guidelines to control corruption and bribery.

c) Where does the money go? The benefits of productivity translate into financial flows, which can be measured and then oriented in line with social policy. A proper understanding of these financial flows must be sought and public light must be shed on such areas as:

- Overall revenues and profits in different sectors of the food network;
- Expenditures in advertising and marketing by the companies which control the industry;
- The extent & diversity of holdings, financial flows in integrated companies & financial institutions;
- The distribution of benefits & land ownership & control patterns;
- Information about 'production efficiencies' and full cost accounting.

d) International trade and investment and the waged agricultural worker. Ironically, those whose work to feed the world are often least able to feed or protect themselves. Conditions are particularly deplorable for the landless rural workers. The terms and conditions of employment of many are furthermore deteriorating as globalisation has increased demands for 'flexibility', meaning a substantial increase in migrant labour, day-labourers, seasonal labourers and temporary workers, who perform the lowest-skilled tasks under substandard working conditions. They suffer in terms of pay, social protection, housing, education and medical protection, and their condition is even worse, where 'labour contractors', undermine the employment relationship.

e) Implications for safety and security of food supply Liberalised terms of trade, and control by multinationals have resulted in a free, often secretive movement of hazardous technologies

and products around the world, replacing indigenous technologies that provide employment and an economic basis for the community, and are in harmony with the nature. Changes are often thrust upon local populations by high-powered advertising promotions, and predatory pricing practices. Such trading patterns are buttressed by international agreements that make it difficult for countries to protect themselves against these practices, to set high food standards, or pay heed to the preferences and needs of their local populations; e.g., the recent EU ban on beef.

3. Agriculture, trade and investment policies for a sustainable food supply

There is an undeniable need for new trade and investment rules that support food sovereignty, the right to govern supply, and promote agricultural models based on multifunctionality.

a) Social considerations and 'Just Transition'²⁵ In 1999, Kofi Annan, Secretary-General of the United Nations called on business and political leaders at a World Economic Forum to support core values in human rights, labour standards, and environmental practices, as defined by international agreements. Nowhere is the need greater than in agriculture production and food. Trade unions place a special priority on 'Just Transition' as a pre-condition to ensure that workers and consumers do not bear the full burden of shifts to sustainable patterns. Employment and social implications of changes must be understood beforehand, and social transition measures, which include compensation, retraining and re-employment measures should be contemplated, to ensure a continued livelihood and an orderly conversion for workers and farmers.²⁶

b) Worker and community involvement All legitimate stakeholders must play a meaningful role in planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating processes²⁷. As food is fundamental, all elements of civil society must be involved to harness maximum benefit from the skills, experiences, expertise, and information from all stakeholders.

c) Policies that assign a role to Government and a strong public sector Controversies over food supply and safety highlight the need for improved regulation of land, agriculture and the food supply, in contrast to the deregulation and international trade liberalisation that dominated

²⁵ See TUAC Note to OECD, *Liaison Committee with Inter-governmental Organisations*, Paris, 1999

²⁶ The IUF has negotiated Codes of Conduct with two of the largest corporations in the food industry as "framework agreements" at national and local levels. They take into account legislation and collective agreements, and "Just Transition" where work is threatened by technological and structural changes.

²⁷ An overwhelming consensus which emerged from CSD99 Dialogue Session on Tourism

most of the 1990's. Governments have developed considerable competency in these fields, especially local authorities in transportation, energy supply, waste disposal, water supply and sewage disposal, roads, communication and increasingly, and in information technology systems. Governments are also in a position to stimulate desirable development through financial and other forms of direct assistance. They may introduce taxes, levies, grants and other financial instruments, and remove ones that perpetuate unsustainable patterns. Funding for 'just transition' programs for workers may be provided by economic measures already identified by the OECD. Impacts on employment and other social factors must be understood to minimize social costs.

d) Policy within the framework of International Agreements Given the increasingly globalised nature of agriculture and food, national rule-based systems must be backed by strong international agreements and protocols. **Standards related to processes and production methods (PPM's)** must be included in all trade negotiations, to allow consumers and governments to take measures against nations and suppliers that clearly violate environmental and other sustainable development standards - especially where these are inconsistent with Multilateral Environmental Agreements²⁸, and the precautionary principle. We support the call for trade policy based on fundamental labour rights, based on the 1998 *Declaration of Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work*. We also see the need to reinforce international *Food Safety Agreements*, and other Instrument must be further supported as elements of change.

4. Beyond narrow globalisation: A new world order

In the final years of the last Millennium, public opposition caused the world's political and business leaders to abandon a multilateral agreement on investment, and postpone WTO talks on agriculture. The 'liberalisation agenda' of the last generation must now be replaced with based on different criteria.²⁹ World trade must undergo a series of reforms, to respond to concerns expressed in Seattle and elsewhere, and to address the needs of the poorest nations. It must assign a central role to international bodies, such as United Nations and the ILO, and chart a more

²⁸ Some of these agreements related to: climate change (UNFCCC), bio-diversity, ozone depletion, endangered species, chemical accidents and safety, prior & informed consent, among others.

²⁹ This sentiment was expressed in the Financial Times, *If free trade is to serve its purpose, it must not result in a race to the bottom. Only negotiated, enforceable minimum standards can solve problems in basic areas like protecting workers and the environment.* R. E. Lighthizer, FT, Dec. 4-5, 1999

sustainable path towards a world prosperity that focuses on the public good. As a minimum, a New World Order must incorporate the following:

- **Support the for development of a sustainable food system;**
- **New ways of governing transnational corporations;**
- **Replace rhetoric with action on less developed countries & provide special, differential treatment;**
- **Co-operate fully with international organisations.**

World hunger and other problems of unsustainable agricultural production will be eliminated only if governments and international organisations implement substantial changes in favour of resource distribution, poverty reduction, food security and respect for core labour standards. We must abandon of policies that favour multinationals, and their technological 'fixes' of intensive agriculture and their food networks. An agenda of 'liberalisation' must be replaced with one to promote sustainable development and to serve the the public health of all citizens of the world.

A revised & more detailed version of this document will be published in time for CSD2000.

Comments and feedback are welcome



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Multi-stakeholder dialogue on sustainable agriculture

Note by the Secretary-General

Addendum

Discussion paper contributed by the non-governmental organizations*

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* The views and opinions expressed in the present discussion paper are those of the non-governmental organizations and do not necessarily represent those of the United Nations.

Eighth Session of the UN Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD), April 2000

NGO Contribution to the Multi-stakeholder Dialogue on Sustainable Agriculture Dialogue*

Section 1: Choices in Agricultural Production Techniques, Consumption Patterns and Safety Regulations: Potentials and Threats to Sustainable Agriculture

Sustainable agriculture, food security and food safety are more urgent goals than ever as we enter the new millennium. In both developed and developing countries the agricultural sector has a variety of roles: to help ensure food security, anchor rural development, provide resources for the livelihood and adequate incomes of a majority of people, and to do this without destroying the ecological base. There are thus three inextricably linked components, social, economic and environmental, to agricultural sustainability. Chapter 14 of Agenda 21, Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development (SARD), lays the groundwork for this definition and scope.

Issues and Concerns

In contrast with holistic farming systems with their close links between agriculture and ecology, modern production systems in the post-World War II period are reductionist in their approach, favouring large farms, specialised production, crop monocultures and mechanisation, and compromising on ecological principles, and human health. While the former produced modest but stable yields, the latter showed initial high yields, followed by decreasing output per unit of

* The Sustainable Agriculture/Food Systems (SAFS) Caucus of the NGO Steering Committee to the CSD coordinated the preparation of this paper. SAFS Caucus is co-chaired by the Association of Barbados NGOs and the International Partners for Sustainable Agriculture (IPSA). Numerous NGOs provided inputs for this paper including: Accion Andina, Bolivia; Agriculture Missions, US; Agroecology/Environmental Studies, U. of California; Association for the Promotion of Organic Farming, India; CGIAR NGO Committee: Center for Citizen Initiatives, US-Russia; Centre for Development Studies, University College, Dublin, Ireland; Centre for Environment and Society, University of Essex; CLADES, Latin America; COASAD, Africa; COSTED, India; Consumers Union, US; Dutch NGOs and partners, Netherlands; Farmers' Link, UK; German Environment and Development Forum; GRET, France; Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy; Institute for Sustainable Development, Poland; Intermediate Technology Development Group, UK; International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements; International Indian Treaty Council; International Institute for Rural Reconstruction, Philippines; IRED, Zimbabwe; MONLAR, Sri Lanka, Asian NGO Coalition, Philippines; Neosynthesis Institute, Sri Lanka; OXFAM Kenya; Popular Coalition to Eradicate Hunger and Poverty, Italy; REDES - Amigos de la Tierra, Uruguay; Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, UK; Rural Food Security, Tanzania; Sobrevivencia, FOE Paraguay; Sustain: The Alliance for Better Food and Farming, UK; The Institute for Food and Development Policy/Food First, US; The Pesticides Trust, UK; The Urban Agriculture Network; Third World Network; UNED-UK SARD Working Group; World Hunger Year; World Resources Institute, US; World Wildlife Fund, UK, Switzerland, Canada; and ZERO Regional Environment Organisation, Zimbabwe.

energy input. The measurement of yield per unit of land has also been biased towards industrial agriculture. In India, for example, figures on rice production in pre-Green Revolution farms were unfavorably compared with the yield of monoculture farms without comparing the total yield of the former in terms of the various rotation crops, other crops grown with rice plants (polyculture) and animal husbandry (Shiva, 1991). A 1999 study released at the Maastricht Conference showed that small farmers worldwide produce from 2 to 10 times more per unit area than do larger, corporate farmers. Small farms are "more productive, more efficient, and contribute more to economic development" with communities surrounded by populous small farms having "healthier economies" than those surrounded by depopulated large, mechanised farms. Small farmers also take better care of natural resources, including reducing soil erosion and conserving biodiversity, thus safeguarding the future sustainability of agricultural production (Rosset, 1999).

Industrial agriculture also saw the replacement of a diversity of closed farming systems, where the cycles of nutrients, energy, water and wastes emulated a natural ecosystem, with more open systems resulting in wasteful use of natural resources and a major problem of agricultural waste. Biodiversity of crops, animals, fish and soil ecosystems, which are essential for sustainable agriculture continues to be threatened by monocultures or near monocultures and intensive use of chemicals. For instance, the documented impact of Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPS) in the form of commercial pesticides and dioxin (an industrial pollutant), both of which contaminate not only the natural irrigation sources of farmland and Indigenous territories worldwide, and on which farmers and Indigenous Peoples depend, but also contaminate the traditional fish and game eaten by many as an essential protein base. While no longer used in some countries, they are extensively used in the developing world, where they degrade with difficulty, inflicting long term damage to ecosystems and many agricultural lands and Indigenous territories.

No longer is it denied that industrial agriculture continues to face an ecological crisis. There are two categories of "ecological diseases" associated with capital-, energy- and chemical-intensive agriculture: a) problems directly associated with the basic resources of soil and water, including soil erosion, loss of inherent soil productivity and depletion of nutrient reserves, salinisation and alkalisation (especially in arid and semi-arid regions), pollution of surface and groundwater, and loss of croplands to urban development; b) problems directly related to crops, animals and pests, including loss of crop, wild plant and animal genetic resources, elimination of natural

enemies of pests, pest resurgence and genetic resistance to pesticides, chemical contamination, and destruction of natural control mechanisms.

Industrial agriculture, coupled with the impetus of international trade and consumption patterns that strain the planet's natural resources, has also destabilised the social and cultural fabric of farming communities. The impact has been even more dramatic for Southern societies, particularly for indigenous peoples. In many societies, women who had critical roles in farm decision-making and the conservation of seeds, found themselves displaced when commercial monocultures were introduced. Moreover, women and children tend to be the main victims of the malnutrition such monocultures have failed to solve, and even contributed to. Thus the problem of agricultural production cannot be regarded only as a technological one; attention to social, cultural, political and economic issues that account for the crisis is crucial.

Unfortunately, even as one chapter of Agenda 21 acknowledged the unsustainability of chemical agriculture and the limits of the Green Revolution, the same corporate interests that championed and benefited from the first "revolution" aggressively promoted the "Gene Revolution" as the panacea. Hence the fulsome promises of the Biotechnology chapter in Agenda 21. The Commission on Sustainable Development in its third session called for a more balanced assessment of the new biotechnologies, in the light of new scientific evidence of hazards.

Solutions and Recommendations: The Way Forward

In this paper, sustainable agriculture refers to organic/ecological agriculture, with its complexity of ecological, social, economic and cultural dimensions. Many are traditional or indigenous systems, especially in the South, that are surviving the onslaught of globalisation of industrial agriculture. There is a significant increase in the North of organic/ecological farming, reaching commercial scales, that build on practices that had been abandoned when monocultures and chemicals took over. A more radical transformation of agriculture is needed, one guided by the notion that ecological change in agriculture cannot be promoted without changing the strategic goals in agriculture and comparable changes in the social, political, cultural, and economic arenas that also constrain agriculture. This approach is consistent with the call in Agenda 21 for a comprehensive assessment of national agricultural policies within the context of a supportive international environment.

Call for Action: Institutional Action and Possible Partnerships

Production Systems

1. The CSD should call for various forms and systems of organic/ecological agricultural production currently in use to be supported and further enhanced. These include traditional and indigenous systems, particularly in the South, and techniques and systems developed in the North in recent years. Governments and multilateral institutions should remove programmes, such as price support, that perpetuate monocultures and instead support, among others, crop rotation and polyculture activities, that form part of ecological approaches with small farmers as a priority target. The CSD is urged to accelerate the implementation of the Agenda 21 and the Programme of Action adopted at the five-year review of Agenda 21. To facilitate this, there should be a call to develop a mechanism for an ongoing multi-stakeholder dialogue through a working group on sustainable agriculture and rural development (SARD) to report back to the CSD on a number of issues, particularly those highlighted in the papers presented at this Dialogue of CSD 8.

2. We look to inter-governmental institutions such as the CSD to take actions which represent the public interest. In particular, the vulnerability of farmers and consumers in developing countries to the hazards posed by genetic engineering and related technologies and their products needs special attention, given the lack of information and biosafety capacity in those countries. Biosafety must be addressed by the United Nations and not the World Trade Organisation (WTO), and the CSD is the most appropriate forum for a continuing broad-based review of new technologies, supplementing and complementing the work of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Cartagena Protocol on biosafety.

3. Organic/ecological agriculture is now beyond just vision and potential, and is rapidly and increasingly contributing to sustainable agriculture in real terms. It is therefore timely for the CSD to promote the mainstreaming of organic/ecological agriculture amongst governments, bilateral and multilateral agencies. In particular, the FAO Committee on Agriculture (COAG)'s endorsement of "the environmental and potential health benefits of organic agriculture and its contribution of innovative production technologies to other agriculture systems and to the overall goals of sustainability" should be highlighted and further endorsed by CSD.

4. With regard to the existing and even growing use of chemical pesticides, the CSD should:

- a) Call for support for the speedy completion of the process which is amending the International Code of Conduct on the Distribution and Use of Pesticides, and support its implementation;
- b) Indicate that the maximum residue levels of pesticides being established under Codex Alimentarius for agricultural produce in international trade need to be at levels which ensure maximum safety for consumers. National residue levels should aim for consistency to protect domestic consumers;
- c) Acknowledge that pesticides should not be used in developing countries if they are classified by the World Health Organisation (WHO) as 'extremely' and 'highly' hazardous, and also preferably not those classified 'moderately' hazardous;
- d) Call for the removal and safe destruction of the stockpiles of obsolete pesticides in developing countries and countries with economies in transition which are threatening health and the environment, and introduce regulation and training to ensure that stockpiles are not accumulated in future to the detriment of future generations.

Rights of indigenous peoples, farming communities and consumers

It is fundamental to the progress of sustainable agriculture and food security that the rights of indigenous peoples and farming communities to seeds, land, water and other natural resources are guaranteed. To that end the CSD should call for:

- a) Financial support for existing organic/ecological agricultural activities and for transitional activities away from chemical and monoculture-based production, including IPM programmes. The target for such support should be family farms and communities, especially those who are impoverished;
- b) Phasing out of subsidies for unsustainable practices;
- c) Action by national governments to complete the revision of the FAO International Undertaking on Plant Genetic Resources to legally protect farmers' rights to own, conserve and use traditional seeds. Strengthening the rights of farmers would empower them to make choices in favour of sustainable production;

- d) The removal of obstacles to the protection of traditional and indigenous knowledge, including the provisions permitting the patenting of life forms contained in the Agreement on Trade-related Intellectual Property Rights, as part of the ongoing WTO review of those relevant provisions.

International cooperation

1. There is an urgent need to rebuild a commitment to North-South dialogue and cooperation that would eventually result in increased aid volume, better terms of trade for the South and a greater balance in global economic relations and structures that are supportive of organic/ecological agriculture. Governments should phase out subsidies in agricultural production, energy, transportation, advertising, export, etc., which support unsustainable food systems, and replicate publicly funded models which support the transition to low-input, ecological and organic farming. They should also give priority support to small scale family-owned farms, through appropriate policies including land reform and trade protection for national food markets when needed. A start can immediately be made to reform the content of aid and improve its quality in agriculture and rural development. A serious review of the past and future of various forms of aid (bilateral, multilateral, research, technical advice and projects) can be made a valuable exercise.

2. The FAO should complete its work on the evaluation of the potential contribution of organic agriculture to sustainability goals by 2000, and formulate and implement support programmes to that end by 2002 to enable a review at Rio+10.

Consumption patterns and consumer rights

1. Local consumption of the produce of sustainable agriculture should be encouraged, as this will reduce transport costs and energy waste, as well as increase the commitment of consumers to the farmers who produce their food as well as their local environment. In this regard, the CSD should call for support for urban organic/ecological agriculture so that increasing urban populations do not put more pressure on rural communities and land for the supply of food.

2. The CSD and individual governments should reaffirm and implement the right of consumers, individually and through various associations, to full information and informed choice in the

market place. The Consumer Protection Guidelines adopted in 1999 should be fully and urgently implemented.

Research and policy

1. The CSD has a vital role to play in supporting and recognising ongoing research on the real contributions of organic/ecological agriculture to, among others, food security, biodiversity conservation, soil protection/enhancement, water conservation and the socio-economic well-being of farming communities and consumers' interests. The CSD should function to galvanise the research findings in these areas into policies and implementing programmes at all levels.

2. Accordingly, mainstream research priorities should be reversed from their emphasis on industrial agriculture and genetic engineering and be directed to the diversity of organic/ecological options that already exist, and to enrich knowledge and understanding of more alternatives. Support for public interest research, at national, bilateral, regional and multilateral levels is crucial for this purpose. The true multiple values of small farms should be recognised and reinforced, and form the basis for policies on sustainable agriculture, food security and rural development.

Section 2: Ecological and Socio-Economic Foundations for Defining Best Practices for Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development (SARD)

Issues and Concerns

Despite a slower global population growth rate, agricultural systems around the world still need to double food production in the next century in order to eliminate hunger. However, hunger will continue to persist if issues related to poverty, access to food and distribution are ignored. While most analysts agree that food production from existing farmland needs to be increased, opinions vary as to the best method for achieving this goal. Conventional wisdom asserts that doubling food supply requires more effort to intensify agriculture through emphasis on mechanization, pesticides, fertilizers and biotechnology. However, other analysts point out that the gap between demand and production is continually growing, and will not be bridged simply by developing new agricultural technologies. Most hungry consumers are too poor to buy the food they need, while poor producers cannot afford expensive capital intensive technologies developed by

external organizations seeking financial returns. Moreover, these technologies are often not suited to the conditions and needs of small farmers, traditional farming communities and indigenous peoples who have already been bypassed by agricultural intensification efforts. In addition, the sustainability of these technologies has been questioned.

The greatest challenge for humanity is to protect and sustainably manage the natural resource base, while feeding and housing a population that is still growing, and recognizing the land and resource rights of traditional farmers and indigenous peoples. "Intensive" models of agricultural production are also affecting the rights of women relating to access to, control and management of land.** It is, however, becoming clear that technologies and processes are available that are able to produce more food for poorer groups without causing damage to the natural environment. Indigenous Peoples, for instance, have developed over many generations a holistic traditional scientific knowledge of their lands, natural resources and environment, which has been explicitly acknowledged in Agenda 21, Chapter 26. Thus, the primary need is for solutions largely based on existing local resources and traditional skills and know-how and/or grassroots initiatives informed by NGOs, farmers' and indigenous peoples' expertise, while at the same time protecting the traditional knowledge of Indigenous Peoples. While a number of ecologically-based practices exist, they are not being promoted actively in most countries.

A key policy challenge is to formulate a strategy founded on the informed participation of relevant stakeholders at all levels of discussion, that enhances food security, provides paths out of poverty and conserves the natural resource base of agriculture. In the absence of such a people-centered agricultural research and development model, significant opportunities to raise agricultural productivity in economically viable, environmentally benign, and socially uplifting ways will be irrevocably lost.

Solutions exist - The question is how best to support their adoption?

How then can we encourage transitions in both traditional and intensive systems towards greater sustainability? Sustainable farming seeks to make the best use of nature's goods, by integrating

** See NGO background paper on the role of land tenure in sustainable agriculture and food security: "The Sustainable Management of Land Resources – An Essential Building Block in National Food Security Planning." The Popular Coalition to Eradicate Hunger and Poverty, Italy.

natural processes such as nutrient cycling, nitrogen fixation, soil regeneration and natural enemies of pests into food production processes. It minimizes the use of non-renewable inputs (pesticides and fertilizers) that damage the environment or harm the health of farmers and consumers. And it makes better use of the knowledge and skills of farmers and indigenous peoples, so improving their self-reliance and capacities through participatory approaches to rural development.

Four Options for Change

1. Better use of available renewable resources (natural capital) - For a variety of reasons, water, soils and biodiversity have not been used most effectively in the past. The options include water harvesting; soil and water conservation - e.g. contour cropping, terraces, minimum tillage, grass strips; composting, livestock manure; irrigation scheduling and management; restoration of degraded or abandoned land; rotational grazing; habitat management for pest-predators; drainage systems and sub-soiling; raised beds or chinampas; bio-pesticides and bio-fungicides. Protection and conservation of non-invasive animal species is another priority.
2. Intensification of single sub-component of farm system - A different sort of improvement to farm or livelihood systems involves the intensification of a single sub-component of their farm, while leaving the rest alone, such as through double-dug beds, adding vegetables to rice bunds, or digging a fish pond. These technologies can significantly increase total food production for rural livelihoods, particularly of protein and vegetables. The beneficiaries are often children during "hungry" seasons.
3. Diversify by adding new productive natural capital and regenerative components - The third type of improvement to natural capital involves the diversification of the whole agroecosystem through addition of new regenerative components, such as legumes in cereal rotations, fish in rice, agroforestry and livestock. These technologies lead to a total farm re-design, which can result in synergistic interactions - where one component of the system positively contributes to the success of other components.

4. Better use of non-renewable inputs and technologies - Where external and non-renewable inputs are being used, the system can move towards more sustainable and effective production by ensuring precise applications of inputs with little or no wastage or damage to natural or human capital. With time this approach evolves towards an input substitution phase, where chemical inputs are replaced by organic or biological inputs, a strategy followed by most organic farmers. The ultimate goal however is to move beyond input substitution by breaking the monoculture with biodiversification approaches that allow the farm to sponsor its own nutrient cycling, pest control and productivity.

Agroecological/organic systems are not limited to producing low outputs, as some critics have asserted. Fifty to 100 percent increases in production are rather common with most alternative production methods. In some of these systems, yields for crops that the poor rely on most -- rice, beans, maize, potatoes, barley - are already being increased by 200 percent or more, relying on labor and management more than on expensive purchased inputs, and capitalizing on intensification and synergy.

Recommendations for Institutional and Stakeholder Actions

1. Integrated Partnerships: It is urgent that governments and international public organizations encourage and support effective partnerships with NGOs, local universities and farmers' and indigenous peoples' organizations in order to assist and empower poor farmers to achieve food security, income generation, and natural resource conservation. A major challenge for the future entails promoting institutional and policy changes to realize the potential of the alternative approaches. Needed changes include:

- a. Increasing public investments in agroecological participatory methods;
- b. Changes in policies to stop subsidies of conventional technologies and to provide support for agroecological approaches;
- c. Improvement of infrastructure for poor and marginal areas;
- d. Appropriate equitable market opportunities including market access and information, including fair trade schemes;

- e. Security of tenure and progressive decentralization processes, which, at the same time, respect indigenous peoples' inherent rights to their ancestral territories;
- f. Change in attitudes and philosophy among decision-makers, scientists, and others to acknowledge alternatives;
- g. Strategies of institutions encouraging equitable institutional partnerships with local NGOs and farmers; replace top-down transfer of technology model with participatory technology development and farmer-centered research and extension. In this context, institutions: public and private, governmental and non-governmental, need to recognize and support the ability of small and marginal farmers to contribute significantly to future world food production if given appropriate cooperation and encouragement in the form of institutional change and investments.

2. Appropriate Policy Support for Scaling Up & Mechanisms for Ongoing Stakeholder Dialogue

Sustainable agriculture can contribute significantly to natural and social capital, as well as make an impact on rural people's food security, welfare and livelihoods. But without appropriate policy support at a range of levels, these improvements will remain at best localized in extent or, at worst, wither away.

With some important exceptions, many of the sustainable agriculture improvements seen in the 1990s throughout the world have arisen without significant national and institutional policy reform. To date very few countries have given explicit national support for sustainable agriculture by putting it at the centre of agricultural development policy and integrating policies accordingly. Significant change is required in the case of policies framed to deliver increased food production in order to incorporate environmental and social benefits too. In addition, food policies framed to help deliver cheap and abundant food regardless of quality will have to change, while rural development policies and institutions focusing on 'exogenous' solutions to the economic and social problems of rural communities need to be refocused toward community-based and participatory development. While much can be done with existing resources, the shift towards a more sustainable agriculture will not happen without some external help and money. Significant transaction costs will be incurred, such as the costs of learning new knowledge, the costs of developing new or adapting old technologies, the costs of learning to work together, the

costs of institutions having to break free from existing paradigms of thought and practice. It will also cost time and money to rebuild depleted natural and social capital. In addition, vested interests in maintaining the status quo could make such reforms difficult. For example, fertilizer companies do not have any incentive to support a transition to legume-based farming or biofertilizers due to the huge potential revenue loss. An ongoing mechanism for dialogue among stakeholders in sustainable agriculture will thus be essential to solving these problems.

3. Research: Promising research areas for evaluation and promotion of alternative technologies and policies include: green manure, cover crops, improved fallows, agroforestry, aquaculture, crop-livestock mixed systems, IPM, biological control, organic soil management and nutrient cycling, processes of technology adaptation and adoption, supportive policies, institutional partnerships and market development.

The international community and governments must continue or increase investments in agricultural research because it can take years or decades to develop new lines of research and put research findings into sustainable practice on the land. Developing countries, particularly those with high population densities, will need international cooperation to gain access to the results of such research and to technology aimed at improving agricultural productivity in limited spaces, as well as access to resources that will allow producers to conduct agricultural research that is responsive to their own needs. Ways to ensure that privately funded research is made more accountable to farmers, public concerns and the results made more available is needed.

Specific Action Proposals

1. Implement as noted in Agenda 21, 26.4(a) "ratification and application of existing international conventions relevant to indigenous peoples and their communities (where not yet done) and provide support for the adoption by the General Assembly of (the current) declaration on indigenous rights.
2. Recognize as in para 26.5 (ii), the need to protect Indigenous Peoples' traditional knowledge (CBD article 8 (j) and elsewhere), "(increase) the efficiency of indigenous peoples' resource management systems, for example, by promoting the adaptation and

dissemination of suitable technological innovations." Traditions, knowledge and practices, and the cultural heritage of indigenous peoples and other farming communities must be respected in all policies, laws and activities undertaken by governments as well as partnerships with NGOs.

3. Endorse a participatory approach for farmer research and training as a necessary basis for the desired transition towards sustainability.

Section 3: Knowledge for a Sustainable Food System: Identifying and Providing for Education, Training, Knowledge-Sharing and Information Needs, Issues and Concerns

"Knowledge for a Sustainable Food System" covers three main areas. The first is the transition to a sustainable food system, and the steps that governments and major actors at the CSD can take toward this in terms of policies, education and awareness. A second concern is the knowledge, education and training which farmers and farmworkers need, especially the small farmers who comprise the vast majority of family farms throughout the world. Within this area, the role of women farmers and of indigenous peoples is of particular importance. A third issue is the education and knowledge that consumers need about the food system, food choices and food skills. If we are to make the transition to a food system based on sustainable farms, vibrant rural communities, and safe, healthful food, we need a new awareness, training and education, flowing into changed policies and actions (USDA, Rosset).

Solutions and Recommendations for the Transition to a Sustainable Food System

1. Communicating the Message of Sustainable Agriculture - Governments, international agencies, and communities should develop education and information policies to communicate the scale, the productive potential, and the multiple social and environmental contributions of sustainable agriculture, with particular attention to small-scale farming and rural development. These communication policies should break through the misconception that sustainable and regenerative agriculture is a return to a low-technology, backward form of agriculture.

Sustainable agriculture incorporates innovations from scientists and farmers, uses high technology and ancient wisdom, and can be used by all types of farmers and on every kind of farm (Pretty).

Small-farm agriculture remains the predominant form of agriculture in the world, numerically dominant in the United States, and central to the production of staple foods in developing countries. Further, small farms have multiple functions which large farms lack. They embody diversity - biodiversity, diversity of ownership, of cropping systems, landscapes, culture and traditions. Special reference should be made to indigenous peoples as creators and conservers of agro-biodiversity, and holders of knowledge, practices and innovation systems that sustain food security in large areas of the planet.

Decentralized land-ownership encourages economic opportunity in rural areas. Small farms create a personal connection to food through rural-urban exchanges and farmers' markets. They are vital to the economy, both in developed and developing countries. The essential role of women in food production and rural well-being, especially in the South, must be supported in agricultural policy and communicated in education and training (USDA, Rosset).

Farming systems are extremely diverse throughout the world, and the transition to sustainable agriculture can be communicated in terms of a series of "steps toward sustainability" (Pretty). These steps from conventional modern farming move through improved economic and environmental efficiency (Step 1), integrating regenerative technologies (Step 2), and redesign with communities (Step 3), which involves farmers and rural communities themselves in creating sustainable practices.

This vision of a sustainable food system for farmers, farmworkers, traders and consumers can only be achieved through a participatory approach. Sustainable agriculture is not a fixed set of practices or policies but a process of social learning and participatory research, starting with the assets already within communities, and supplying targets and indicators to measure progress. (Pretty).

2. Farmers' and Farmworkers' Knowledge, Training and Education - Too often, the training of farmers and farmworkers is based on a top-down diffusion of information from scientists to

"uneducated" farmers and farmworkers, based on the assumed superiority of a scientific, technical, industrial model of agriculture. This approach does not recognize many important facts which are essential for effective farming policies:

- (a) That no technology is appropriate for all types of farmers; each farmer has unique constraints, limits and assets. Resource-poor farmers must use low input and "appropriate" technologies to survive.
- (b) Farmers live in highly variable and diverse environments - soils, water regime, biological fertility, etc. They have accumulated a wealth of site-specific knowledge and experience which the researcher does not have, especially on local biodiversity and its possible uses.
- (c) Many farmers face urgent problems of being unable to reduce or eliminate their dependence on pesticides without information and training which will help them adopt sustainable alternatives.
- (d) Moreover, farmworkers have the right to a living wage and safe working conditions, to belong to a trade union and to elect health and safety representatives, to protection against exposure to hazardous pesticides, and they have the right of refusal to work with pesticides which damage human health and the environment.
- (e) Traditional knowledge and technologies that have evolved from millennia of experimentation and practices are often the most appropriate tools to achieve sustainable practices in agriculture.
- (f) The role of women in the transmission of knowledge and in sustainable food production must be recognized and strongly supported. The majority of farmers in the South are women. Providing equal gender opportunities for education, training and information on food production and nutrition is key to achieving sustainable agriculture.

Solutions and Recommendations

Farmer-centered research and extension has no single organisational form, but its philosophy and objective are common across many programs. Farmers are no longer to be considered as the recipients or adopters of technology. Rather they are central to its generation, application and monitoring. Instead of the "linear" model of research and extension, where scientists develop new technology that is transmitted through extension workers to farmers, experience and observations support the "triangular" model. This envisions scientists, extensionists and farmers

interacting with one another directly in a three-cornered relationship. Governments and agricultural agencies can improve the knowledge, training and education of farmers and farmworkers through the following policy initiatives to develop sustainable agriculture and rural development.

- (a) *Improve Rural Education* - Increase investments in rural education, and develop rural education programs, which integrate farmers' training and practices in their curriculum e.g. "rural family schools".
- (b) *Improve Farmers' and Farmworkers' Training* - Recognize the central role of small farmers in research and development. Support the training programs of farmers' own organizations. Reform the training of agricultural and communications professionals to serve small farmers and the rural poor through an integrated approach of rural development, including an agro-ecological approach of farming systems and landscapes. Where appropriate, develop decentralized information networks and databases on agricultural innovations and locally based success stories via CD ROMs and the Internet. In some cases, governments have begun working in new, less directive and more collaborative relationships with farmers. These new approaches are thus, based on active farmer involvement -- indeed, often farmer leadership -- in a process of identifying problems and needs to start and guide the process; of determining and choosing among possible solutions; of testing, monitoring and evaluating the results of new practices; and of helping to disseminate those results that are considered beneficial. This process can be characterized as participatory technology development, as farmer-centered research and extension, or as farmer-to-farmer agricultural improvement. An enabling environment at local, national and international levels is essential to support existing processes and promote the development of new ones, which adopt this approach.
- (c) *Facilitate the participation of small farmers in national policy debates* - Give farmers' organizations access to modern communication techniques and material, and help them develop their communication strategies. Promote national debates and conferences on the role of family farming for the future of the nation, and highlight farmers' successful

initiatives in terms of economic organization, education, and management of natural resources. Support the conservation, protection and development of traditional knowledge and innovation systems, and integrate these into national educational systems and agricultural projects. People's participation at the local, national and level, particularly women's, is necessary for improved food production, better access to food, and nutritional well-being.

3. Education and Knowledge of Consumers and Other Stakeholders - In addition to what has been said about governments and farmers, a sustainable food system cannot be built without the education and knowledge of consumers and other participants in the food system, such as retailers, distributors, and banks. This knowledge extends to the food system, food choices, and food skills.

A crucial problem, at least in the developed world, is that many people are increasingly separated from their food system. Faced with a food system of apparent abundance, with supermarkets providing a seemingly endless supply of food, people have lost touch with such basic questions as: who is growing our food and how is that food being grown? Who controls the land and the food system itself? Who gets to eat and who is going hungry? How healthful and safe and nourishing is our food? Why are family farms being lost and rural economies in decline, not only in the developing world, but also in the developed world? A connected problem is the loss of traditional knowledge of small-scale agriculture and traditional skills of using local food.

Family farms and other sustainable agriculture institutions need markets for their products, and markets reflect the choices of distributors, retailers, lending institutions, and consumers. Educational programs are needed to make these choices informed by knowledge of sustainable food systems: information on the hidden environmental and social costs of chemical agriculture and GMOs in terms of loss of top soil, pollution of groundwater, the inhumane treatment of animals in factory farms, and threats to human health. Education for a sustainable food system would build on many successful programs such as community gardens for disenfranchised youth in the United States, ecological youth networking in Latin America, ecological footprint

initiatives in Europe, farmers' markets and community-supported agriculture, policy initiatives by governments to subsidize the transition to organic and low-input farming. Programs to recover skills of food preparation and cooking, and nutrition education in schools and communities are also urgently needed.

Section 4: Globalization, Trade Liberalization and Investment Patterns

Context

An agricultural policy review "particularly with regard to food security, and sustainable development" is mandated in Chapter 14a) of Agenda 21. In 1997, the General Assembly recognized the provision of sustainable food security (and adequate housing) as [t]he greatest challenge to humanity. The present context of the Chapter 14 review in the CSD dialogues is to determine which trade liberalization and globalization policies might promote sustainable agriculture, rural development and food security.

Issues

The following paper presents four issues pertinent to the nexus of food security, sustainable agriculture and agricultural trade liberalization: a) how to reduce the trading of agriculture commodities at prices below their cost of production, i.e. "dumping"; b) how to analyze the impact of agriculture market concentration on sustainable development and food security; c) how to develop sustainable agriculture indicators to assess the economic and environmental impact of globalized agricultural trade and investment; and d) whether a Convention on Sustainable Food Security would be a viable instrument to create coherence and focus for sustainable food security policy at the multilateral level. While Major Groups and CSD delegates may not agree on policies to address these issues, we hope that they will agree that each issue merits debate and the deliberation at the CSD.

Proposed Institutional Actions

First, the CSD should request the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) to use existing research and develop new methodology to determine national cost-of-production and export price statistics for major agricultural commodities. This request should target in particular agricultural commodities defined as crucial to national and household food security. The CSD

should request technical expertise to develop uniform accounting procedures to calculate export price and cost-of-production figures, including externalized environmental costs. Where resources were lacking for a national report and/or where market structures for crucial commodities were similar within a region, FAO could provide a reporting methodology and technical assistance that enabled smaller nations to work together to issue a regional report. These reports would be the basis for World Trade Organization (WTO) negotiations to phase-out of the dumping of agricultural commodities at prices below the cost-of-production.

The harmful effects of such dumping, currently permitted under WTO rules, have been well documented by NGOs. Developing country farmers, unable to compete with dumped imports, are driven off the land into already overcrowded cities, resulting, in the words of an Argentine diplomat, in "more rural poverty, more environmental degradation, lower industrial salaries and more social unrest. The WTO discussion toward reducing agricultural dumping has been mired in endless debate over what constitutes a "trade-distorting" subsidy. The negotiation of anti-dumping disciplines through a simple comparison of export prices and cost-of-production figures would provide a way to break this deadlock and to move towards resolution of this problem, which distorts trade, and damages the environment and food security. Even if WTO members failed to negotiate a phase-out of dumping, cost-of-production figures could be used by governments to assist national agricultural and food security planning. Major Groups could use such figures, for example, to draft national agricultural legislation proposals and to build technical capacity for environmentally sustainable food security.

Second, the CSD should request the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) to assist governments and Major Groups to report on the concentration of market power in national and regional markets for agricultural commodities and sources of agricultural inputs. UNCTAD has an on-going mandate to work on restrictive business practices and the structure of commodity markets that would provide invaluable background for this work. These reports could include analytical summaries of major mergers and acquisitions; case studies of market concentration impacts for producers, food industry workers, and consumers; reports on national legislation and enforcement of laws concerning anti-competitive business practices; government assistance offered to and received from major agribusiness companies; and the impact of market concentration on food security, rural development and the environment.

Governments and Major Groups could use the reports for a variety of purposes, including for analysis of agribusiness trade and investment proposals; for preparation of trade and environment policy proposals; and, for dialogue with and proposals to multilateral lending institutions. The concentration of agricultural commodities and inputs market share, particularly by transnational agribusiness companies, has been a principal mechanism for the creation of global agricultural markets. Some commentators even argue that a high degree of concentration in agricultural production and trade is more "eco-efficient" than in markets structured by less concentration. Annual national or regional reports on market concentration in agricultural commodities would test such contentions, and offer evidence to justify the restoration of competition to markets where its suppression has had a negative effect on sustainable agriculture and food security.

Third, CSD 8 should seek funding and the technical assistance of relevant UN agencies to hold a multi-stakeholder meeting to develop sustainable agriculture indicators. Such indicators could be used to measure the impact of agricultural trade liberalization on sustainable agriculture. For example, they would be tools for the implementation of the environmental review of WTO Agreement on Agriculture (AoA), called for by CSD 3. Such a review could be carried out on a case study basis similar to the studies produced for the FAO Symposium on "Agriculture, Trade and Food Security" (held 23-24 September 1999 in Geneva). In addition, in the context of CSD 9's focus on transportation, the CSD could commission studies of the impact of current agricultural commodities transportation on climate change. These reports could be used as part of the WTO's national-level Trade Policy Reviews. A CSD facilitated synthesis of ongoing research in sustainable agriculture indicators could also inform the direction of agro-environmental work in the UN system and among member states. In cases where smaller nations could not finance participation in a process to establish and apply such indicators, member states should commit resources to permit their participation and use of the indicators.

Fourth, the CSD members should consider calling on the General Assembly (GA) to authorize a special Intersessional to consider proposals for a Global Convention on Sustainable Food Security. The special Intersessional report and accompanying studies from governments and Major Groups could be used by the GA to help determine whether there was sufficient interest and capacity for the GA to authorize the creation of an International Negotiating Group (ING) to prepare Convention negotiations. At the World Food Summit in 1996, more than 1,200 non-

governmental organizations supported the development of a "Code of Conduct on the Right to Food" and a "Sustainable Food Security Convention. (It should be noted that many NGOs do not believe that a Food Security Convention process is a viable means of improving food security.) The elaboration of the Code is now underway at FAO and the UN High Commission on Human Rights. Without a multilateral negotiating forum proposals for a Convention cannot be refined by governments and other stakeholders into legal instruments to realize Chapter 14 objectives. CSD members should consider using the mandate of Agenda 21's Chapter 39, "International Legal Instruments and Mechanisms," to propose that the General Assembly authorize the creation of an ING to prepare negotiations for a Convention.

In considering the elaboration of a Sustainable Food Security Convention, CSD delegates and Major Groups should acknowledge the evidence that agricultural trade liberalization has had negative impacts on food security, particularly in developing countries. An alternative forum to negotiate multilateral solutions to food security, one that could help set some parameters for multilateral trade negotiations on agriculture, is needed. These proposed Institutional Actions should receive the support of and expertise of grassroots-level organizations, particularly in developing countries.

To that end, the CSD should request United Nations agencies, Major Groups and governments involved in implementing these Actions to design grassroots effective, participatory research and consultation processes. Such processes could be used, e.g. to determine cost of production figures and dumping impacts; to develop sustainable agriculture indicators; and to solicit proposals for a possible Food Security Convention. The CSD should request that agencies, Major Groups and governments seek dedicated funding to enable grassroots level organizations to participate in the aforementioned processes.

Possible Partnerships

Major Groups that have historically been active in public education and/or technical capacity-building for food security and sustainable agriculture should initiate dialogue with organizations that may not yet have recognized their vested interest in improving food security and sustainable agriculture. Examples of such organizations would include agricultural and rural bankers associations whose clients are going out of business due in part to present policy regimes, and

insurance companies whose financial viability depends on reducing the impact of catastrophes caused by ongoing environmental deterioration, rural-to-urban migration and other factors. Agricultural cooperatives, member organizations and businesses, particularly those that have been harmed by below cost-of-production prices for commodities, by wholesale or retail market concentration, or by the externalization of environmental costs, may also be willing to discuss and perhaps support some of the institutional actions outlined above. In designing and executing the proposed Institutional Actions, Major Groups, UN agencies and governments should interface academic and grassroots expertise. For a successful CSD 8, it is vital that there not be separate channels of communication to governments that facilitate a polarization between private sector and public interest Major Groups. We hope that there will be a full and honest debate on the proposals made here, so that progress in the full implementation of Chapter 14 can be made.

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